

Drayton to Head Human Relations Commission

By DAVID L. DILLARD
Chronicle Staff Writer

Jerry Drayton said that since he last served as chairman of the N.C. Human Relations Commission in 1985, race relations in the state have gotten worse.

He hopes to stem that tide when he will soon begin his second tenure as commission chairman following his appointment by Gov. Jim Hunt.

Drayton, who has been pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church since 1944, previously served as chairman of the commission from 1977 to 1985. Since his previous term, Drayton said "it's obvious" that race relations have gotten worse.

"They have gotten worse in Winston-Salem because race relations have deteriorated much all

over the state," he said. "I have worked here during the 1960s with the Civil Rights Movement to desegregate hotels, schools, and so forth. I'm coming with eight years experience and the expertise in dealing with racial problems and how to resolve them."

Drayton, whose previous appointment also was by the Hunt administration, was surprised by this week's appointment.

Said Hunt: "Jerry has provided great leadership, as chair of the commission during my first administration and in his community. I'm glad to have him on our team again, helping us ensure the equality and rights of our citizens."

The 21-member commission is

responsible for promoting social and economic equality in North Carolina.

Drayton believes that improved race relations will put the state in a better position to attract businesses.

"One of the greatest areas needing improvement is race relations, because no businesses will want to locate here," he said. "Businesses don't want to go where there is racial animosity and strife."

Drayton said he has ideas to improve race relations throughout the state and he plans to meet with Hunt this week.

He received his bachelor's degree from Morehouse College and his divinity degree from Howard University. He holds doctorates



Jerry Drayton

from Shaw University and Lynchburg (Va.) Seminary and College. Drayton also has a certificate in clinical and pastoral counseling from the Bowman Gray School of Medicine.

Ruling

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intent on weakening the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which was designed to protect minority voters against discrimination and under-representation. The landmark civil-rights law is credited for making major gains in Congress and state legislatures for African Americans.

"There are a number of reasons for creating a majority black district that justifies a district of this kind," said Rep. Mel Watt, who represents the North Carolina's 12th Congressional district, the district addressed in the lawsuit.

He said he does think the district will be affected.

"I think after this exercise is gone through, I think the district will be sustained," he said. "What it does is it strings the case out, and therefore adds to the uncertainty and whatever clouds there may be hanging over the district. Also, it gives encouragement to people in other states to mount the same kind of attack. Those are the two unfortunate consequences of the opinion, not that I feel so much that anything will happen to the districts. Ultimately, the outcome will be the same."

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, writing for the majority, concluded that five white Durham County voters had valid grounds for challenging in a lawsuit the new, worm-shaped 12th district, which stretches 167 miles hugging the thin line of Interstate 85 from Gastonia to Durham. The district is so narrow at one point that drivers in northbound lanes are in the 12th district but drivers in the southbound lanes are in another district.

O'Connor was joined in her opinion by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony M. Kennedy and Clarence Thomas, the only black on the court.

If the court rules for or against the districts, Watt said, the ruling would likely be appealed back to the Supreme Court. The decision does not affect results of the 1992 elections.

Watt and Eva Clayton, who represents this state's 1st Congressional district in eastern North Car-

olina, were the first blacks elected to Congress since Reconstruction. Both districts are mostly black.

The decision creates a new avenue for challenging mostly black districts. Until now, the court has required white voters to prove that the districts discriminated against their right to vote.

"What the court is saying is, 'We just don't care what black voters' preferences are, we are not interested in full participation for African Americans,'" said attorney Dayna Cunningham of the NAACP Legal Defense fund.

Before the Voting Rights Act was passed nearly three decades ago, there were fewer than 300 black elected officials in the United States; there now are nearly 8,000. In the House, the number of blacks jumped from 25 to 38 this year, the first class elected after 1990 redistricting, giving the Congressional Black Caucus considerable power.

"It could be a setback," said state Rep. Warren "Pete" Oldham, who represents Forsyth County's 67th district. "It could open a floodgate of suits. There is a connection (to the Voting Rights Act), but I don't see any far-reaching ramifications."

Said Mazie Woodruff, the only black member of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners: "I don't want to lose after all these years two very good Congress persons," "I hope they will allow us the option of redrawing district. Black folks have a hard time getting elected when it's countywide, let alone statewide. I just hope this can be overturned when it gets back the state. It could have a domino effect."

Sonia Jarvis, executive director of the National Coalition on Black Voter participation, said: "The court suggests it is no longer important to be concerned about issues such as minority representation."

Those taking the narrower view cited language in the decision saying courts need to apply close scrutiny to district lines when they are "so bizarre" they appear to be "unexplainable on grounds other than race."

Group Seeks to Help Make City Streets Safer

▲ Ex-Panthers provide solutions for crime

By SABRINA JONES
Chronicle Staff Writer

Airline agent John Moore, construction worker Robert Greer and city Alderman Nelson Malloy may seem like your average hard-working citizens.

However, these men, former members of the Black Panther Party, are three of crime's most determined adversaries as they combat violence as the founders and officers of Black Men and Women Against Crime. Extending its efforts to all communities, the organization is resolved to making Winston-Salem a safer and more peaceful city for both blacks and whites.

According to Moore, co-founder and vice president of the organization, the group started meeting in June 1990 as the result of a reunion of ex-Panther Party members. Disenchanted with the level of violence among blacks, the members decided to provide solutions for a very serious problem.

"It didn't seem that there was anybody helping the problem of drugs and crime in the black community," said Moore.

Moore, Greer and Malloy formed Black Men and Women Against Crime after viewing a television program about a similar organization called the Ad Hoc Committee Against Crime in Kansas City, Mo. The men traveled

to Kansas City to observe the activities of the group and to collect ideas for their own organization.

The purpose of the organization is to help the community fight against crime and violence using such methods as tenant associations and crime-watch programs.

Recently the group has begun a new neighborhood improvement program in which children ages 8-12 work for three to four hours each Saturday to help improve the appearance of the community. Doing such chores as cutting grass, running errands for the elderly and collecting trash, the participants are paid a stipend of \$4 per hour. A grant of \$7,700 from the United Way of Forsyth County is being used to fund the stipends and to purchase yard equipment along with other needed items.

"We wanted to give them [the children] something to do instead of turning to drugs and violence," Moore said.

The program, originally geared toward having 40 children participating, has now increased to 60 participants and includes other activities such as lectures on teen-age pregnancy and AIDS, crafts and field trips. Later in the year, the group's activities will include a talent show and a play that will be written, produced and directed by the children.

Black Men and Women Against Crime has been successful in bringing improvements to the

community.

"Since we have been in existence, we have helped nine neighborhoods form tenant associations and crime-watch groups. Up until



Alderman Nelson Malloy at a recent vigil by Black Men and Women Against Crime following a shooting at Cleveland Avenue Homes.

the (Daron) Bines shooting, Cleveland Avenue was a totally different place. It was a zoo," Moore said.

Greer, the group's president, also agrees that the organization has had a positive impact upon the lives of city residents.

"Everyday someone will give you a good word. People take pride in something different going on. It's a 'we' thing. We identify with something positive," said Greer.

The organization's activities also include candlelight vigils for

the victims of fatal crimes. "It brings to the forefront that everyone needs to focus on the level of violence in our city," said Moore.

Black Men and Women Against Crime would like to expand its children's programs

using a grant of \$1,500 from the Forsyth County Drug and Alcohol Coalition. The group also plans to have the Winston-Salem Rescue Squad give first aid and CPR training to 10 residents from six inner-city neighborhoods. The group's officers are Gail Burnette, treasurer, and Flossie Allen, secretary. Black Men and Women Against Crime is non-profit and is totally supported by contributions. The office is located in the Winston Mutual Building at 1225 E. Fifth St.

Newell Won't Seek Re-election

this decision is that it's been 16 years, and having to deal with the kind of things we deal with demands a new vision."

Newell said she does not see "too many things I'm interested in happening" through the board. Specifically, she said the city has not effectively dealt with escalating crime and violence.

She said the city should implement a task force to study crime and its causes.

"We have taken into consideration every other task force, and we've spent money and time doing it," she said. "It's not something that I relish, coming out of that office and not having reduced the incident of crime."

Newell wrote a June 2 memorandum to city officials asking for the formulation of a Crime Task Force. The letter was sent to Mayor Martha S. Wood, City Manager William Stuart and the other city aldermen.

"The crime incident... has increased 29 percent. Many of us believe that it is time that the City of Winston-Salem, County of Forsyth, and all corporations who are concerned, make a serious effort in creating a blue-ribbon committee to study the root causes of crime," Newell wrote.

"It is hoped that this committee will be studied, created and given the power or whatever is needed to reduce the incidence of crime in our city," the letter further stated. "I realize that in looking at figures on crime in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, large numbers of the criminals and victims are minorities, and this needs to be studied."

Newell said placing additional

police officers in high-crime areas, as the new budget allows for, is not the answer to curbing crime.

"This is nothing but a band-aid approach," she said. "We ought to be studying the root causes. If we take as top priority reducing the crime and violence, we can do something about it. We can find a task force for everything else. I don't think anyone has had the guts or the fortitude to ask for it before."

Newell was elected city alderman in 1977. She has seen many controversial and troublesome issues facing this city, including the infamous "Winston-Salem Four" political scandal, when some politicians were sent to prison for taking bribes. She has also seen the city endure a lot of racial hatred and bigotry.

Through it all, Newell said she has always tried to address the con-

cerns of her constituents. Thus, when members of the African-American community called for a Citizens Police Review Board, she supported it.

But when some members of the black community challenged the mayor's list of appointees to the review board and submitted an alternate list, Newell endorsed the mayor's list. The other three black aldermen voted for the alternate list, saying there were not enough blacks or women on the mayor's list.

"I think I've been a good and responsible alderman," Newell said. "If I look at this city from 1977 to now, this city has made long strides."

Despite the city's apparent problems, said Newell, she said she would have liked the city to have been cited as an All-American City.

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"I believe with that kind of endorsement we would have been well on our way to addressing some of the problems," she said. "It could have recruited business and economic development."

Newell would not say who she would like to see replace her in the East Ward, although one possible candidate is Jocelyn Johnson.

Johnson, a social worker at N.C. Baptist Hospital, said she was unaware that Newell had decided to not seek re-election.

She was Newell's campaign manager during her last election. She said several people have asked her to consider running in the fall.

"That's what I'm doing," she said.

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